The origin of the Kap *section of the Barendra Class of Brahmans of Bengal.—By* PANDIT YOGEŚACHANDRA S'ASTRI.

[Read May, 1903.]

In the 12th century A.D.[1] during the reign of Ballala Sena the number of the Brahmans who came to Bengal from Kanauj in the time of Adisura became immensely increased. There were 350 Brahmans on the east bank and 750 on the west bank of the river Ganges.[2] The former were designated as Barendras on account of their being the inhabitants of Barendrabhumi, the present Rajshahi division, and the latter were called Rarhis owing to their being the inhabitants of Rarhabhumi, the present Burdwan division and the western part of Murshidabad district.

During this period there were no Brahmans well versed in the Vedas in the south-eastern provinces of India. The kings of these provinces consequently asked Ballala Sena to send some Brahmans, who were well versed in the Vedas, to their provinces. At this Ballala Sena was very glad, and having kept 100 in Barendrabhumi sent 250 Brahmans to those provinces. He distributed them in the following order :

[1] निखिलनृपचक्रतिलकश्रीमद्बल्लालसेनदेवेन ।
पूर्णे शशिनवदशमिते शकाब्दे दानसागरो रचितः ॥
१०९१ शः अः = १०९१ + ७९ = ११७० खृः अः ।

इति समयप्रकाशः ।

N.B.—According to General Cunningham, Dr. R. L. Mitra and Mr. R. C. Dutta, Ballala reigned in the 11th century A.D., and according to लघुभारतम् he reigned in the 14th century A.D.

[2] वरेन्द्रे तु तदा सार्द्धत्रिशतान्यग्रजन्मनाम् ।
राढ़ायान्तु द्विजास्त्वासन् सार्द्धाम्भोधिशतानि च ॥

वारेन्द्रकुलपञ्जी ।

fifty in Magadha, sixty in Bhota, sixty in Rabhang, forty in Utkal (Orissa), and forty in Maurang.[1]

After a few years Ballala divided those one hundred Barendra Brahmans into three sections according to their qualifications, namely: (1) Kulins,[2] (2) Çuddhaçrotriyas,[3] and (3) Kaṣṭaçrotriyas. The Kulins were the following eight houses: (1) Maitra, (2) Bhima, (3) Rudra (Bagchi), (4) Sanyamini (Sanyal), (5) Lahiri, (6) Bhaduri, (7) Sadhu (Bagchi), (8) Bhadara; and the following eight houses were the Çuddhaçrotriyas: (1) Karanja, (2) Nandanabashi, (3) Bhattashali, (4) Lauri or Laruli, (5) Champati, (6) Jhampati, (7) Atirtha, (8) Kamadeva.[4] Among those houses, Udayanacharya, the celebrated author of the Kusumanjali,[5] a treatise on the ethical branch of the Nyaya philosophy, was

[1] वारेन्द्रवासिविप्राणां मध्ये चैकशतद्विजाः ।
वरेन्द्रे रक्षिता राज्ञा सदाचारपरायणाः ॥
द्विशताधिकपञ्चाशद्वारेन्द्राणां द्विजन्मनां ।
पञ्चाशन्मगधे षष्ठिर्भोटे षष्ठिः रभाङ्गके ॥
चत्वारिंशदुत्कले च मौड़ङ्गेऽपि तथाङ्गकाः ।
दत्ता नृपतिना हर्षं वल्लालेन महात्मना ॥

वारेन्द्रकुलपञ्जी ।

[2] आचारो विनयो विद्या प्रतिष्ठा तीर्थदर्शनम् ।
निष्ठाशान्तिस्तपोदानं नवधा कुललक्षणम् ॥

कूर्म्मपुराणम् ।

[3] जन्मना ब्राह्मणो ज्ञेयः संस्कारैर्द्विज उच्यते ।
विद्यया याति विप्रत्वं त्रिभिः श्रोत्रियलक्षणम् ॥

प्रायश्चित्तविवेकः ।

[4] आदौ मैत्रस्तथा भीमो रुद्रः संयामिनी तथा ।
लाहिड़ी भादुड़ी साधुर्भादरः पङ्क्तिपूरकः ॥
करञ्जो नन्दनावासी भट्टशाली च लाउरी ।
चम्पटी झम्पटी चैव आतीर्थः कामदेवकः ॥

वारेन्द्रकुलपञ्जी

[5] क्रतोः सङ्कर्षणो नाम्ना पुत्रो जज्ञे महामतिः ।
सङ्कर्षणात् सूतो जातः भल्लुकाचार्य्यविश्रुतः ॥

born in the house of Bhaduri; and Kulluka Bhatta, the reputed author of the Manvarthamuktavali,[1] a commentary on the Manusamhita, was

भल्लुकस्य सुतावेतौ योगेश्वरदिवाकरौ ।
भादुड़ौ च करञ्जश्च तयोर्गाञिः स्मृतः क्रमात् ॥
योगेश्वरस्यात्मजो यः पुण्डरीकाह्वकः स्मृतः ।
ततो वृहस्पतिर्जज्ञे दिविदेवगुरुर्यथा ।
वेदज्ञो ब्रह्मनिष्ठः स आचार्य्यपदमाप्तवान् ॥
वौद्धाचार्य्यजिह्मनिना विचाररणमूर्द्धणि ।
विजितोऽपमानितश्च वनं गत्वा ममार च ॥
वृहस्पतिसुतः श्रीमान् भुवि विख्यातमङ्गलः ।
धर्म्मसंस्थापनार्थाय वौद्धविध्वंसहेतवे ।
ख्यात उदयनाचार्य्यो वभूव शङ्करो यथा ॥
सन्देशं पितृनाशस्य तथा पितृपराभवम् ।
वौद्धानां विजयञ्चैव श्रुत्वा जज्वाल मन्युना ॥
ततः कालेन कियता वौद्धान् जित्वा विचारतः ।
ब्रह्मतत्त्वप्रकाशाय चकार कुसुमाञ्जलिम् ॥

भादुड़ीवंशावली ॥

[1] इति वारेन्द्रनन्दनावासीयभट्टदिवाकरात्मज-
श्रीमत्कुल्लूकभट्टविरचितायां मन्वर्थमुक्तावल्यां
मनुवृत्तौ द्वादशोऽध्यायः ।

मं सं १२ । ६०३ टीका ।

अपिच—

गौड़े नन्दनावासिनाम्नि सुजनैर्वन्द्ये वरेन्द्र्यां कुले
श्रीमद्भट्टदिवाकरस्य तनयः कुल्लूकभट्टोऽभवत् ।
काश्यामुत्तरवाहिजह्नुतनयातीरे समं पण्डितैः
तेनेयं क्रियते हिताय विदुषां मन्वर्थमुक्तावली ॥

इति मन्वर्थमुक्तावल्याम् ।

born in the house of Nandanabashi. It is needless to mention the names of 84 houses of the Kaṣṭaçrotriyas as they have no connection with the present topic.

There are different accounts as to how, after Ballala Sena, the Kap section was originated from the Kulin mentioned before. Among them the most popular is the following:—

Once upon a time many Brahmans of the Kulin and the Çrotriya sections were invited to a dinner given by Çukadeva Acharya, an inhabitant of the village named Brahmanbala, on the occasion of his father's annual Çraddha ceremony. There was a prevailing custom in that time, which still exists, that the dinner should not begin until all the Brahmans were present, especially when a respectable man was absent. But in that dinner this custom was not observed, as the dinner began without waiting for one Nrisinha Laurial,[1] of Çantipore, who was formerly an inhabitant of the village named Laur, in Çrihatta (Sylhet), and who, it is said, though a Brahman, used to live by selling betel-leaves. He did not come in proper time. Afterwards when Nrisinha came he wanted to know the cause of the violation of the custom. In reply he was told that as he was not a respectable man so none could find any necessity to wait for him. At this reply, Nrisinha felt himself much insulted and determined to raise his status in the society. He accordingly came home and started for Majgram, a village on the river Atrai in the district of Rajshahi, with a view to get his daughter married to Madhu

Kulluka Bhatta was an inhabitant of the village named *Guakhara*, formerly in the district of Rajshahi but now in the Pabna district. Sir W. Jones praised him in the following words: "At length appeared Kulluka Bhatta, a Brahman of Bengal, who after a painful course of study, and the collation of numerous manuscripts, produced a work, of which it may, perhaps be said very truly, that it is the shortest yet the most luminous, the least ostentatious yet the most learned, the deepest yet the most agreeable commentary ever composed on any author, ancient or modern, European or Asiatic."

1 The well-known Advaita Acharya, a friend and disciple of Gauranga, was the great great-grandson of this Nrisinha Laurial. Nrisinha's son was Vidyadhara; his son Chakari; his son Kuvera Acharya; his son Advaita Acharya.

भक्तावतार आचार्य्योऽद्वैतो यः श्रीसदाशिवः ।
महादेवस्य मित्रं यः कुवेरो गुह्यकेश्वरः ।
कुवेरपण्डितः सोऽद्य जनकोऽस्य विदाम्वरः ॥

लाउरीयालवंशावली ।
and
गौरगणोद्देशदीपिका ।

Maitra of that village, who was the most respectable Kulin among the Kulins of the then existing society.

After two or three days Nrisinha reached Majgram and met Madhu Maitra while he was performing his evening ritual on the bank of the river Atrai. He instantly made Madhu's acquaintance and requested him to marry his daughter. Madhu at first refused to do it being afraid of social degradation. But when Nrisinha expressed his firm determination to kill himself in the presence of Madhu after killing his wife, daughter, and cow, and throwing his Çalagrama (the family deity) which he took with him, into water, Madhu was then obliged to consent to marry his daughter. The marriage was, accordingly, performed then and there. When Madhu came home with his new wife, she was not accepted by his sons and former wife and was illtreated by them. Madhu was bound to divide his house into two halves by means of a fencing, in one of which he began to live with his new wife, being practically excommunicated from the society.

After some time Madhu found himself in great difficulty when his father's annual Çraddha day drew near, because none of the Brahmans of Majgram or its neighbourhood would dine in his house on that day. Helpless as he was, he went to invite Dhain Bagchi (धेँड् बागची), who was his brother-in-law (sister's husband) and lived some miles off his house; but Madhu could not find him. Madhu, however, asked Dhain's wife (his sister) to tell her husband to go to his house on the day of his father's Çraddha and returned home.

When Dhain Bagchi came home he heard from his wife of Madhu's suddenly coming to his place and was very much astonished, because Madhu never used to come to his house before. He asked his wife the cause of Madhu's coming, but she could not tell anything more than what Madhu told her. He, however, started for Majgram and reached there at midday. While entering into Madhu's portion of the house he, being obstructed by the fencing which Madhu had made, exclaimed, "Well, Sir, what a *Kap* have you created here?" "Yes Sir," Madhu replied, "I have created a *Kap* there." The word Kap is not a grammatical one so it bears no etymological meaning. It was spontaneously uttered by Dhain Bagchi in the sense of something intervening. But this word afterwards became the designation of the sons of Madhu Maitra by his former wife, who became a section of Barendra Brahmans intermediate between the Kulins and the Çrotriyas.

Afterwards Dhain Bagchi met Madhu Maitra and heard everything from him that happened before. On the very day he summoned all the Kulins and Çrotriyas of Majgram and its neighbourhood to attend a meeting to be held at Madhu Maitra's house to judge the con-

duct of Madhu's sons. The meeting was held and the verdict of that meeting was that the sons of Madhu Maitra by his first wife were guilty of disregarding and illtreating their father.

Thereupon Dhain Bagchi, together with Madhu Maitra, as the head of the society declared that henceforth the sons of Madhu Maitra by his first wife would no longer be classed among the Kulins. They would be *Kap* and their position in the society would be an intermediate one between the Kulins and the Çrotriyas. They also declared that henceforth should any Kulin touch their water or even come in contact whatsoever with them, he also would be a *Kap*. But this latter declaration was afterwards modified by Raja Kamsa Narayana Ray, of Tahirpore, who ruled that a Kulin should not lose his Kulinship unless he married the daughter of a Kap or allow his daughter to marry a Kap. This rule is still in existence.